Political Science 500.
Social Scientific Thinking

Fall, 2012	Rick K. Wilson
M 9-12	HZ 118, x3352

Course Description

In this course and the research practicum offered next semester you will begin to learn how to conduct basic research in social science. I will focus on the issues of theory construction, research design, and measurement, as well as how best to communicate your research to the scholarly community. The goal is that by the end of the year you should be able to design and conduct a variety of research projects, to read the professional literature competently, and to pass the "basic tools" exam.

Overview of Your Obligations

This is a seminar. You are expected to have read all of the assigned readings before the beginning of the seminar and, thus, be able to participate in class discussions. Each student will be an active participant in the seminar. I cannot overemphasize the importance of consistent and meaningful seminar participation. You may hate speaking up (or somehow think that whatever you have to say is silly), but you are entering into a profession where being able to articulate an idea is crucial. The seminar is a good place to develop and hone your skills.

Throughout the semester you will have written assignments. The nature of the written work will vary as to the topic under discussion changes. These papers are due via email (rkw@rice.edu) by 11:59 a.m. on Sunday. Unless you have a verified excuse, papers arriving after the deadline will be regarded with ill humor and may not be credited.

You will be required to make presentations to the class. Sometimes, but not always, these presentations will be based on your written work. Presentations are different from normal class participation. You will be told about presentations ahead of time.

Components of Your Final Grade

Class participation 20%
Written assignments 30%
Presentations 20%
Final Project 30%

Texts

You will probably want to own all of the following. Most will last throughout your career.

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. [KKV]

Clarke, Kevin A. and David M. Primo. 2012. *A Model Discipline: Political Science and the Logic of Representation*. Oxford University Press.

Poteete, Amy, Marco Janssen, Elinor Ostrom. 2010. *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press.

Heinrich, Bernd. 1989. *Ravens in Winter*. Vintage Books.

Sword, Helen. 2012. *Stylish Academic Writing*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Reading Assignments.

The course syllabus is a work in progress. Please note that I reserve the right to add or delete readings as the semester progresses. Readings that are not otherwise easily available (e.g., via the library's online resources) will be located somewhere in Herzstein. You are responsible for finding and retrieving materials that are online.

Cooperating on Assignments.

In this class there may be group assignments in which you may divide up the tasks in the assignment in any way you wish. All members of the group will receive the same grade on these assignments. On all other assignments I expect each student to work independently.

Honor Code.

Rice has an Honor System. The Honor System places a great deal of trust -- but also responsibility -- on the student. All graded work in this course is covered by the Honor System. In each case I will explain what limitations and restrictions you should observe.

Special Needs

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to contact me as soon as possible, preferably during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities need to also also contact Rice Disability Support Services in room 122 of the Ley Student Center [713-348-]5841; adarice at rice dot edu). Fax: (713) 348 - 5199. If calling from a TTY/TDD, dial 711 or 800-735-2989 to be connected through a relay operator.

Key Dates

September 17 – turn in your research paper statement
October 3 – Literature review and hypotheses
October 29 – Research Design
November 26 – Class presentations of research paper (initial draft given to class on Nov. 25)
December 12 – Final draft of research paper

Course Plan.

I. Social Scientific Contributions

What's Political Science? (August 20)
What better way to learn about political science than to read something from a political science journal?

Pick one article that appeared in the American Journal of Political Science in the July 2012 issue. I want you to write a memo to me. It should be no more than one page, single spaced. In your memo I would like you to address the following three points:

a. What is the point to the article that you picked?
b. Why is this piece "scientific?"
c. Why does this article excite you about the future of political science?

Social Science Contributions (August 27)

KKV. Chapter 1.

Clarke and Primo, Chapter 1.

Poteete et al. 2010. *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*. Introduction and Chapter 1.

Lave, Charles and James March. 1975. *An Introduction to Models in the Social Sciences*. Lanham, MD. University Press of America. Chapters 1 & 2; read the problems and think about them. (On Owl Space).

Cowl, Clayton et al. 1998. "Factors Associated with Fatalities and Injuries from Hot-Air Balloon Crashes," Journal of the American Medical Association, 279 (13): 1011-1014.

Orme-Johnson, David W., Charles N. Alexander, John L. Davies, Howard M. Chandler, and Wallace E. Larimore 1988. "International Peace Project in the Middle East: The Effects of the Maharishi Technology of the Unified Field " *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 32 (4): 776-812.

Sword. Chapters 1, 2 and 3.

Social Science Theory (September 5)

KKV, Chapters 2, 3

Clarke and Primo, Chapter 2.

Karl Popper "Science: Conjectures and Refutations" In Popper, Conjectures and Refutations, pp. 33-65 (On Owl Space).

Karl Popper "The Demarcation Between Science and Metaphysics" in Popper *Conjectures and Refutations*, pp. 253-292 (On Owl Space).

Schrodt, Phillip A. 2006. "Beyond the Linear Frequentist Orthodoxy" *Political Analysis*. 14(3): 335-339.

Alford, John R. and John Hibbing. 2008. "The New Empirical Biopolitics" *Annual Review of Political Science* 11: 183-203.

Sword. Chapters 4, 5.

Clarifying Causal Mechanisms (September 10)

KKV. Chapter 4

Clarke and Primo, Chapters 3, 4.

Cook, Thomas D. and Donald T. Campbell. 1979. *Quasi-experimentation : design & analysis issues for field settings.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin. Chapter 1 pp. 1-36

Imai, Kosuke, Luke Keele, Dustin Tingley, Teppei Yamamoto 2011. "Unpacking the Black Box of Causality: Learning about Causal Mechanisms from Experimental and Observational Studies" *American Political Science Review*. 105 (4): 765-789.

Polsby, Nelson W. 1998. "Social Science and Scientific change: A Note on Thomas S. Kuhn's Contribution." *Annual Review of Political Science*. 1: 199-210.

Kocher, Matthew Adam., Thomas B. Pepinsky and Stathis N. Kalyvas. 2011. "Aerial Bombing and Counterinsurgency in the Vietnam War." *American Journal of Political Science.* 55 (2): 201-218.

Sword. Chapters 6,7.

Motivating a Paper and Providing a Literature Review. (September 17)

Thompson, William. 1999. "The young person's guide to writing economic theory" *Journal of Economic Literature*, 37: 157-183.

Pape, Robert. 2003. The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism. *American Political Science Review* 97 (3): 343-361.

Damasio, Antonio. 1994. Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain. New York: Avon Books. Chapters 1 and 2. (On Owl Space).

Knopf, Jeffrey W. 2006. "Doing a Literature Review." *PS: Political Science* 39 (1): 127-132.

Munger, Michael. 2010. "10 Tips on How to Write Less Badly" Chronicle of Higher Education. http://chronicle.com/article/10-Tips-on-How-to-Write-Les/124268/

Wolfinger, Raymond E. 1993. "Tips for Writing Papers." *PS: Political Science*. 26 (1): 87-88

Sword. Chapters 8, 9.

Boundaries on Science. (September 24)

Clarke and Primo, Chapter 5.

Imre Lakatos "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes." in Lakatos and Musgrave *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, pp. 91-196. (On Owl Space).

Paul Feyerabend "The Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes" in Feyerabend, *Problems of Empiricism*, V. II, pp. 202-230. (On Owl Space).

Sword, Chapters 10, 11.

Hypotheses (October 3)

Heinrich, Bernd. 1989. Ravens in Winter.

Basics of Research Design (October 8)

Poteete, Janssen and Ostrom. Chapters 2, 3.

Macartan Humphreys, Raul Sanchez de la Sierra and Peter van der Windt. 2012. "Fishing" Columbia University. Working Paper.
http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/papers1/PA_2012b.pdf

Eline A. de Rooij, Donald P. Green, and Alan S. Gerber. 2009. "Field Experiments on Political Behavior and Collective Action" *Annual Review of Political Science* 12: 389–395

Achen, Christopher. 2002. "Toward a New Political Methodology: Microfoundations and ART" *Annual Review of Political Science* 5: 423-450.

Sword. Chapters 12, 13.

Measurement Issues. (October 15)

KKV, Chapter 5.

Poteete et al. 2010. *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*. Chapters 4 and 5.

Goldstein, Kenneth and Travis N. Ridout. 2004. "Measuring the Effect of Televised Political Advertising in the United States." *Annual Review of Political Science* 7: 205-226.

Ross, Michael. 2006. "A Closer Look at Oil, Diamonds and Civil War." *Annual Review of Political Science* 9: 265-300.

Thunder, David. 2004. "Back to Basics: Twelve Rules for Writing a Publishable Article." *PS: Political Science*. 37 (3): 493-495.

Sword. Chapter 14 and Afterward.

Case Selection. (October 22)

KKV, Chapter 6.

Lieberman, Evan S. 2010. "Bridging the Qualitative-Quantitative Divide: Best Practices in the Development of Historically Oriented Replication Databases" *Annual Review of Political Science*. 13: 37-59.

Geddes, Barbara. 1990. How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics. *Political Analysis* 2: 131-150.

Data Collection. (Oct. 29)

Kennedy, Peter E. "Sinning in the Basement: What are the Rules? The Ten Commandments of Applied Econometrics." *Journal of Economic Surveys* 16 (4): 569-589.

Poteete et al. 2010. *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*. Chapters 6-8.

Coronel, Jason C., Melissa C. Duff, David E. Warren, Kara D. Federmeier, Brian D. Gonsalves, Daniel Tranel and Neal J. Cohen. (forthcoming) "Remembering and Voting: Theory and Evidence from Amnesic Patients" *American Journal of Political Science* (October 2012).

Zaller, John and Stanley Feldman. 1992. A Simple Theory of the Survey Response: Answering Questions Versus Revealing Preferences. American Journal of Political Science 36,3: 579-616.

Palmer, Glenn and Faten Ghosn. 2003. Codebook for the Militarized Interstate Incident Data, Version 3.0. Correlates of War Project. The Pennsylvania State University. Click on Available Datasets. Click on Militarized Interstate Disputes (v3.1). Click on Codebook for MID Incident Data.pdf.

Wedeen, Lisa. 2010. "Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 255-273.

Explanation (November 5)

Clarke and Primo. Chapter 6.

M. Brodbeck "Explanantion, Prediction, and 'Imperfect' Knowledge" in Brodbeck, *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science*, pp. 363-398. (On Owl Space).

Jacqueline Stevens. 2012. "Political Scientists are Lousy Forecasters." Editorial, New York Times. Sunday June 26, 2012
http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/24/opinion/sunday/political-scientists-are-lousy-forecasters.html?_r=1

Henry Farrell. June 24, 2012. "Why the Stevens Op-Ed is Wrong." The Monkey Cage.
http://themonkeycage.org/blog/2012/06/24/why-the-stevens-op-ed-is-wrong/

TBA (November 12)

C. Lessons (November 19)

Axelrod, Robert. 2008. "Political Science and Beyond: The Presidential Address to the American Political Science Association" *Perspectives on Politics.* 6 (1): 3-9.

Poteete et al. 2010. *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*. Chapters 9 and 10.

Paul Diesing. 1991. *How Does Social Science Work? Reflections on Practice.* Chapters 11, 12. (On Owl Space).

IV. Class Presentations (November 26)